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T H E

Old and New Testament Student

VOL. XI.

JULY, 1890.

No. 1.

THE list of special articles announced elsewhere to be published in the present volume of the STUDENT presents a series of subjects connected with biblical study which cannot fail to interest all earnest and broad-minded students. It is amazing, if one but stops to think of it, how many fields of investigation border closely upon the Bible; or, putting it from another point of view, into how many fields of investigation the student of the Bible must penetrate. What with old questions which need reconsideration, and new questions which, all the time, are springing up, the interest continues and deepens. We feel that we have provided for the table of our constituency during the coming months substantial and delicacies which, while satisfying and gratifying every taste, will prove nourishing to all.

THERE are some men whom every one likes; their teachings are appreciated and enjoyed not only by those who accept them, but also by those who hold opinions differing from them. It is the spirit of the man which exerts this influence. This spirit is one of openness and frankness; it betokens a manliness of the true sort. There is an honesty, a candor which demand respect. All this is seen in the working of the man's mind, in the influence it exerts upon others. It is refreshing; it is stimulating. Such a man is really a rarity. Open-minded, ready to receive, and yet not led away by every new form of thought; liberal, appreciative, and yet

conservative in respect to all essential truths; with the historical sense thoroughly trained, with a literary taste well cultivated, with a love for truth which regulates and controls every thought,—this man is Willis J. Beecher, with whom the readers of the *STUDENT* have been familiar from the very beginning of its history, and of whom they will be pleased to read the accurate and sympathetic statement of his colleague, Professor Riggs.

A YEAR ago, it sometimes seems like a decade, the question of the plan of organization of the "Institute of Sacred Literature" was under consideration. There was much uncertainty in the minds of all in reference to the wisest course of action. A multitude of details must be agreed upon and systematized. It was not known whether the co-operation of those desired could be secured. In the minds of some there was serious doubt whether the plan, after all, was feasible. Within a single year the whole situation has changed. The details have been arranged, published, and are in successful operation. The heartiest assistance has been rendered by the leading men of every denomination. From hundreds of instructors and ministers has come the testimony, "This is just the organization we have needed for a long time." Fifteen men known in every section of the county as broad, aggressive and scholarly workers, have taken hold with a zeal and a determination which will certainly secure success. For some months two directorships of the fifteen remained unfilled. These vacancies are now filled, the Rev. Arthur Brooks, of New York City, and the Right Rev. Henry C. Potter, D. D., Bishop of New York, having accepted the positions. All the departments of study are organized. The Summer Schools of the Institute have opened most auspiciously. Every month the outlook broadens. Additional directors will, it is believed, be appointed, in order that the Board may include representatives of the South, of the Far West, and of Canada. Plans for the efficient organization of every state are being consummated. Friends are multiplying; possibilities increasing. What the

result of another year's development will be no one can forecast. It is a great work, a glorious work.

THE frank and strong utterances of the participants in the "Symposium" on expository preaching which readers of the *STUDENT* have observed and doubtless enjoyed, are now crowned by the last word which is spoken by Dr. Wm. M. Taylor, a prince among expository preachers. The experiences of these men and their advice growing out of this experience ought to be carefully pondered by many clergymen. The effect of their words will not be lost. Many congregations will enjoy the fruit in the beginnings of successful expository work on the part of their preachers. Much interest has already been manifested in the "symposium" and suggestions as well as experiences have come unsolicited from readers. One of these contributions which adds names of weight to those who have already expressed themselves on the subject is as follows:

"The importance of expository preaching was urged upon the attention of the students of Union Seminary by Dr. Wm. Adams, who said once, 'Young gentlemen, do not forever give your people crumbs of the bread of life, but now and then give them a good generous slice.' When one of his pupils explained to his church the blessedness of believers as shown in the eight beatitudes, a hearer said to him 'you gave us a good slice of the bread of life to-day and it was well buttered.' Dr. R. D. Hitchcock, that noble preacher, said that the salvation of a young clergyman depended on his study of the Bible. 'Every young man,' he remarked, 'has about material enough for a hundred sermons; when that is gone he must repeat, or move on, unless he studies. I advise you to have one-half of your sermons expository of some book or character.'"

THE average man has no interest in the past, and very little if any in the future, having ears, eyes and thought only for the present. It is the task of the historical scholar to

show him that in the past were grown the ideas and movements which appear in the present and will have their influence also upon the future. This is often a thankless task and must look for its reward in the enjoyment and the benefit which lie in the elucidation of truth and the grasp which such study gives upon the course and destiny of humanity. There are certain lines of work in which the historical scholar and the student of the Bible are co-laborers. In the fundamental purpose just stated in its relation to history in general, the student of the Bible finds his most important work. To follow down the course of the biblical ideas as they enter and permeate the life of men—to discover for us the influence of the biblical life upon the subsequent history of humanity and to demonstrate before the eyes of the present how much we owe to that sacred past—this is one of the highest and most salutary achievements of the historical student of the Scriptures. But his labors too, are often disregarded and he must again and again remind men of the dependence of this age with its methods of thought and its standards of truth and life upon the life and thought of the Bible.

It has been well said by a recent writer that many movements of our time indicate a way of looking at life and its problems which would never have been possible but for the Old Testament with its law and its history of the chosen people. It is this portion of the Bible, too much neglected by men, which has entered into the very essence of our civilization. It is readily granted that our debt to the Founder of Christianity is overwhelmingly great. It is not so clearly understood that the Old Testament not only made Christianity, in a very real sense, possible, gave it a standing place from which to move the world—but has, also, independently, been taken up into the world's life, baptized with the spirit of the Gospel, and sent forth on its mission of proclaiming the ethical ideal of man and the strong imperative of duty. What does not man to-day owe to the Old Testament? One must remember also that for centuries the Jew has steadily held to his heart this volume and found, even in what we must regard as a narrow literalism, life and light in its pages. Let us be generous; nay, let us be honest, and acknowledge

that there is much to be said in favor of the words of this same writer, who declares: "Thus it is that while ready and willing to acknowledge all it owes to the art and philosophy of Greece and what little it owes to Rome, people too readily forget that nearly all that is precious in the moral aspects of our gradually developing civilization, the ever increasing respect for human life and the feeling of human brotherhood, not only originated in the code of Sinai, but have been preserved through the ages by Jewish piety, and often at the cost of Jewish martyrdom."

THE secret of success in anything is concentration. Especially is this true in study. Of no department of study is it more true than of the Bible. There is no book or class of books in the study of which less concentration of effort has been practised than the Bible. This deficiency is seen (1) in the failure to give *consecutive time* to its study; for who is there that gives week after week, or month after month, of close, continuous study to its mastery? Not the Sunday-school pupil, for a few minutes a week is the most which he devotes to it, the result being not much greater than if it were a few seconds rather than a few minutes. Not the Sunday-school teacher, for he finds it difficult to secure even two hours for study, and this is too frequently broken into fragments, or spent in an effort to learn how to teach something which he has not learned, and which he does not know. Not the college student, even in colleges where the Bible is taught, for it is but one of half a dozen of subjects, taken up once or twice a week, with time between each exercise for the effect of the preceding exercise to have been utterly dissipated. Not the theological student, whose case is virtually that of the college student. Not the minister, for his time is occupied, so far as he makes use of the Bible, in an effort to adjust it to the great ideas which, with herculean effort, he has brought forth from within himself; and if he makes use of the original languages, as possibly one in a hundred, or one in a thousand does, perhaps ten minutes each morning are devoted to it. The deficiency is seen moreover (2) in the

failure to employ a *consecutive method* of study. *Verses* are studied as if the particular verse under consideration were a diamond, and all that preceded and followed it were but common clay. One reads three or four chapters in Isaiah, forgetful that these are but part of a whole, the comprehension of which in its entirety is, after all, the great thing to be desired.

It cannot be denied that the faculty of concentration is one difficult to acquire; some never obtain it. It is also true that the opportunity to concentrate is hard to find, even by those who may have the ability. But, no matter how difficult it may be, it is, of all things, the essential thing. If the same amount of time now given to the Bible by the average Sunday-school pupil or teacher, on fifty-two Sundays, could be condensed within *ten*, the result would be five times as great. If the college or divinity student who attends two exercises a *week* in a given subject for thirty weeks, could have them one a day for ten weeks, or two a day for five weeks, he would accomplish twice or three times as much. The same thing will be found true in every line of work. The bane of modern education is the dissipation of effort resulting from a lack of appreciation of this fundamental principle.